

## **Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Project Profile VIRGINIA**

**Updated: February 20, 2001**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Program

<b>Focus Areas Funded</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Surveillance and Epidemiology – Core Activities</li><li>• Laboratory Capacity - Biological Agents</li><li>• Laboratory Capacity - Chemical Agents</li><li>• Health Alert Network</li></ul>
<b>Virginia has strengthened its capacity to respond to threats of bioterrorism by:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hiring two epidemiologists for surveillance and epidemiologic response;</li><li>• Developing partnerships with key local and state emergency preparedness and response entities;</li><li>• Identifying training needs of state and local public health staff;</li><li>• Developing a list of key district health department staff for emergency notification;</li><li>• Providing education to infection control practitioners and members of the Virginia Infectious Disease Society regarding timely and appropriate notification of reportable conditions, suspicious symptoms and clusters that could indicate an intentional biological or chemical agent release;</li><li>• Working with the “Virginia Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Forum” for public and private health care professionals;</li><li>• Drafting and implementing a surveillance and response plan for West Nile Virus;</li><li>• Expanding Biosafety Level 3 Laboratory Facilities to accommodate evaluation and development of novel, rapid, and sensitive identification and typing technologies for agents associated with terrorism;</li><li>• Implementing and validating laboratory procedures for identification and confirmation of biological and chemical agents associated with terrorism;</li><li>• Participating in numerous laboratory training courses;</li><li>• Developing a comprehensive distance-learning listserve for nurse manager and distance learning points of contact within all 35 health districts and other statewide programs; and,</li><li>• Participating in table top exercises, conferences, and other meetings.</li></ul>

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**Project Year 2 Plans  
(August 31, 2000-  
August 30, 2001)  
include:**

- Continuing collaborative relationships with public and private stakeholders;
- Planning to follow-up with the “Virginia Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Forum” to foster a stronger network of support and provide a venue for sharing emergency response and disaster response information;
- Evaluating the regulations for disease reporting to ensure the rapid reporting of diseases that may be caused by a terrorist event;
- Revising the current *Virginia Disease Control Manual* to include criteria regarding suspected bioterrorist events;
- Continuing to identify and provide training to staff in combination with principles of epidemiology training;
- Evaluating options for piloting electronic disease reporting; and,
- Enhancing the Laboratory Response Network in Virginia by providing laboratory training for the presumptive identification and proper shipment of biological agents associated with terrorism to Local Public Health and Clinical Microbiology Laboratories.

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